Pacific School of Religion Berkeley, Calif.

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The Christian Century Pulpit

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, *Editor*

VOLUME V | CHICAGO, DECEMBER, 1934 | NUMBER 12

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INDEX, 1934

Two Commandments in One

BY FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets. Matthew 22:37-40.

A CHRISTMAS sermon offers an opportunity of seeking a statement which, as far as any statement can, will summarize the teaching of Jesus. More and more in celebrating the anniversary of the birth of distinguished leaders of mankind we seek to put into briefest compass the essentials of their achievement. I call attention to the way Jesus put together and kept together the duty of love to God and of service toward man. One Old Testament book had declared that men are to love God with heart, soul, strength and mind and another had enjoined that men are to love their neighbors as themselves. In Luke a heckling lawyer put the two injunctions together, and in Matthew Jesus had made the connection as close as possible by insisting that the second commandment is like unto the first. The chief significance of the teaching of Jesus here is in the togetherness of the two commandments.

Some years ago I happened to address an audience in Madras, India, composed chiefly of Hindus. At the conclusion of the address, a Hindu, evidently a man of some standing among his fellows, sought me out and said: "I can understand why Christianity tells men to love God with their whole lives. Hinduism, rightly understood, does the same. I can understand also that any man of genuinely human feeling will do what he can to help his fellowmen; but I cannot understand why Christianity puts love of God and service of man together."

At first I thought I had in this conversation come

25 Cents a Copy Entered as second-class matter October 14, 1929, at Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under the act of March 3, 1879. Published monthly by The Christian Century Press, 440 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. **Two Dollars a Year**

upon a peculiarity of Hinduism. Hinduism does put the vision of God—whatever God may be in the Hindu system—in the first place, and in spite of the humanitarian interest of the particular Hindu who talked to me, does not have much place for the service of the human. As I looked about in my own country, however, and used ordinary eyesight, not to say insight, I perceived that in actual fact multitudes of Christians today are in practice illustrating the Hindu contention. That is to say, they are acting as if these two injunctions do not belong together. On the one hand, we have religious leaders who tell us that the mystic vision is the main concern, or that God himself is the only worthy object of religious thought.

These types of teaching are not so much systems of retreat as of outright surrender. A retreat may be at times most necessary for the renewal of energy with which to return to the practical life, but mysticism of the kind of which I now speak is outright, and at times unconditional, surrender of half or more of the territory which, according to the gospel, ought to be held for Christianity. On the other hand we all know the various types of humanists, who are alike chiefly in their emphasis on the human to the exclusion of everything except a remote and negligible interest in what men have ordinarily meant when they talked of the divine.

The fundamental mistake has been that we have thought of two commandments. They are not two, but one. If there are two separate commandments a Christian may perhaps be pardoned for putting his emphasis on one rather than the other. Christians are seldom well-rounded, or full-orbed anyhow. They are more or less specialists at the best. Nevertheless this double commandment of our Lord cannot safely be divided in practice. The surest insights about God come out of human service and the vision of God reenforces the lives of our fellowmen.

I.

Mysticism seems to be a charmed word with many believers. Mysticism, however, does not amount to anything for Christianity unless it is Christian. Just the mere fact that this or that man is a mystic may have no worthwhile significance till we know what is the nature of the man's vision. There is more mysticism in India than in any other nation on earth, but Indian mysticism deliberately seeks for a dwindling of human consciousness toward the vanishing point, while Christianity seeks through all its exercises to exalt the life to full expression. The Indian mystic seeks passivity, while Christianity makes but little place for passivity. When the Christian mystic talks of passivity, what he at bottom means is a quick and alert responsiveness and receptivity.

The present-day practice of jumbling together the half-dazed semiconsciousness of the Indian, and the narcotically induced trance of the North American Indian, and the daydreaming of the poetic sentimentalist, and the esthetic glow of an artist in the presence of a stained glass window, and the sudden impulse to do this or that which is often called guidance, and the sure insight of the doer of the will of God—this is confusing us as to some of the most essential features of Christianity. In Christianity vision or insight and understanding, as quick realization and awareness of divine values, as an expertness in finding one's way about among high moral duties, is directly dependent upon doing the will of God in human contacts.

If one is to seek the mystic vision one ought to try to find something worth seeing. The Old Testament prophets, for example, had visions aplenty, but somehow they were able to tell us what they saw. Amos in a vision saw a plumbline by which the walls of Israel's national edifice were to be tested. Here surely was a vision worth seeing—worth being sought for today and all the days. Was Jesus a mystic? Not in the sense that would meet the approval of those who today tell us about the mystic experience as ineffable, indescribable and desirable as an end in itself. Jesus—or somebody who in the gospels wrote of Jesus—described his inner experiences in terms that show that they came out of practical life and bore directly upon that life. The crisis of the temptation had to do with the Master's choice of methods in seeking to win men to the kingdom of God.

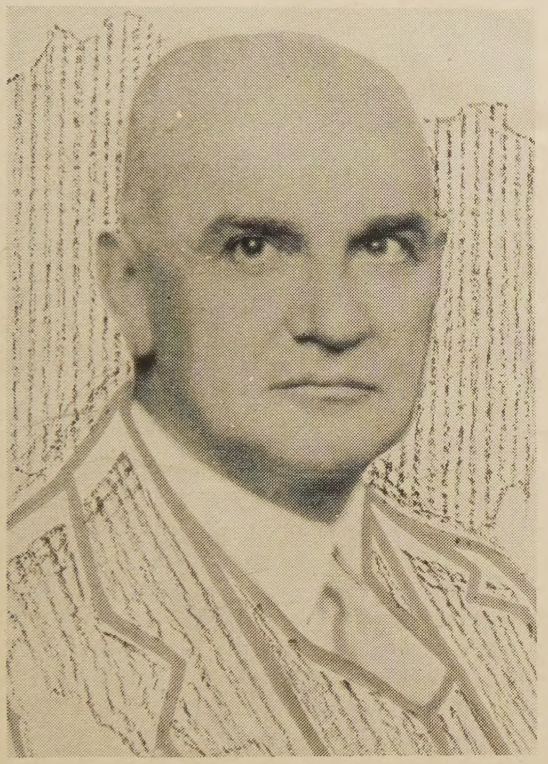
PENTECOSTAL VISIONS, AND "TONGUES"

If anything in the gospel narrative can be called mystic, surely the transfiguration experience can be thus described. The disciples had a vision, and in that vision saw something which they could tell about. They saw Moses and Elijah, the two mightiest men of action in the Old Testament, and they heard them talk with Jesus about the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. A cloud covered the disciples. In later ages the emphasis would have been put on the glory of the cloud without regard to the content of the vision, if the content had not been unmistakably clear. Whatever else we may or may not do with Jesus, we cannot make him a mystic of the type of much current discussion. Hazy, indistinct feelings which cannot get themselves stated intelligibly, vague sensations which suggest guidance to nowhere in particular, foggy emotional stirrings without rational origin or end—these are the sort of thing we have left when we surrender the field of human service as the chief sphere of Christian effort, and the chief stimulus to vision.

If it be urged that the reference to Jesus is not quite fair because the age of the Spirit, with pentecostal illumination, had not yet dawned in gospel days, the reply is that those who received the enlightenment of the Spirit after the earthly career of Jesus had ended, received that enlightenment in the midst of practical activities and judged its value by its practical effects. The vision of Paul on the Damascus road was definite enough. He felt that he stood in the presence of Christ, and understood the significance of the vision sufficiently to ask what he was to do. In Paul's dealing with his own converts he would not allow them even to testify to spiritual powers, such as the gift of tongues, which could not bring any intelligible message to those who did not have the experience. He thanked God that though he spoke in tongues more than all his followers, he did not so speak. He would have none of an edification which edified merely himself. In all periods of its history the church has had to deal with those who have

retreated from the main field of social action and have thought of God as speaking to them as individuals in direct message. All such predominantly personal forms of guidance which lead the individual away from the serious social tasks, end either in silliness or fanaticism.

I happen to be a member of the Methodist church. One of the characteristic teachings of that church has been, or once was, its doctrine of Christian perfection. John Wesley taught that it is possible for a Christian to love perfectly. Wesley had no sooner announced this doctrine than he found himself in trouble with those who got hold of it with a half-way interpretation. Methodists began to say that they loved God perfectly,



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and that they had the witness to this perfection. Wesley himself never professed to have attained perfection because, as he declared, perfection in love means perfection in love to God and man; while he might feel that he loved God perfectly he was sure that he did not love men perfectly—at least some of them; and therefore he would not bear witness to any experience of perfection.

If we wish to see what emphasis on love toward God means, without attempt to love man, or without attempt to show love to God through deliberate cultivation of good will toward men, we have only to look at the practical outcome of many so-called perfectionist movements in the career of the church: movements whose adherents have, through neglect of the human values, become pests and nuisances by their exaltation of piffling trifles as communications from God and by their indifference to the massive needs of mankind.

A soundly Christian mysticism seems to resemble the quick, alert awareness as to artistic values, let us say, which comes to the trained artist after long dealing with the beautiful; or the knowledge of the body that comes to the skilled physician after a lifetime of practice. Their fellows often accept their expert judgment without a syllable of argument or question. Such experts cannot always give formal reasons for their decisions one way or another. Their judgments are their total reaction in a given situation. Professor Francis J. Peabody once preached a richly suggestive sermon on Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life. By walking in the way, said Professor Peabody, we gain more and more of the truth, and out of the truth we attain to that full sensitiveness, that instantaneous power of discernment, that immediacy of sympathy which is life.

Some of our current teaching would have us believe that today we must retreat from the world in a search for God, since the spectacle of things as they actually are drives us to pessimism and despair. If we can find God, we are told, we can then return to the battle with hope. This misses the human fact that contemplation from the viewpoint of the rear of the battle, or to one side of the battle, or above it, is seldom a cure for pessimism. As men slow down in their interest in the greater movements of human society, they lose their power to see clearly. We have made altogether too much of detachment, spiritual or otherwise, as a path to vision.

RETREAT FROM THE WORLD

Nathaniel Shaler, of Harvard, used to tell of a boyhood experience on a battlefield of the Civil War. It seems that during the war a Union and a Confederate army came to battle near the farm on which the youthful Shaler lived in Kentucky. Boylike, Shaler ran down a road which brought him upon the battle from the rear of the Union army. The first view of the battle therefore was of stragglers and wounded and of surgeons working upon the wounded. The sight made Shaler sick. He reeled over to a fence to hold himself together lest he faint. Whereupon a surgeon called out: "Come, son. Take hold." Shaler obeyed and followed the surgeon's directions. As soon as he touched the flesh of a stricken soldier carrying out the doctor's orders as to how to help, all the nausea passed away. Throughout all that day and far into the night Shaler worked with clear eyes and mind, with strength and firmness of grasp, with a constant inner reinforcement which released power in muscle and nerve. The illustration requires no comment.

Some keen preacher has said that there is a notable psychological discernment revealed in that passage in the first psalm which tells us that "blessed is the man who walketh not in the way of sinners, and standeth not in the counsel of the ungodly, and who sitteth not in the seat of the scornful." This preacher pointed out that we have here a slowing down—walking, standing, sitting—with the final stage being a sitting in the seat of the scornful. However all this may be as to biblical exegesis it is true enough as to life, including religious life. The religious sitter, even the sitter waiting for visions of God, becomes pessimistic and indeed scornful if he does not interest himself in the major concerns of the vast groups of mankind.

Of course, the seeker for visions on their own account informs us that if we can just get men interested in

God they will forthwith become interested in one another, which is true only if they become interested in a God who is himself interested in men. The oft-repeated notion that if we could only get men individually converted, we should by that achievement solve all our social problems, is absurd. If we got all men converted without getting it into their heads that war, for example, is at once atheism and murder the last state of civilization might be worse than the first.

A distinguished general of the allied forces in the World War once urged me to preach the old-fashioned gospel of the inner life, because he said it makes men fight harder and die more willingly. It is about time we quit talking about individual conversion to inner religious life as itself a remedy for social ills. After such conversion to inner piety the social ills may easily become worse. It may lead the privileged to think that their privileges come of God and the unprivileged to submit to what the privileged teach as the will of God.

The actual process followed in humanity's moralization of the idea of God is the seizure, usually by a prophet or seer, of some larger and finer ideal of human life as binding upon God as well as upon men. Then the adjustment of this moral insight to the conception of the divine gives that divine itself new force for human life. Professor L. T. Hobhouse, critical of Christianity though he was, used nevertheless to give very largest credit to the Christian idea of man as a social force, coming as that idea did out of the Christian conception of God.

II.

We turn now to the humanists, who insist that we turn away from all thought of God and give our whole attention to the help of our fellowmen. There is a type of humanist whom we must admire as he utters this advice. I refer to the humanist who is himself so absorbed in work for his fellowmen that he does not have time for what he calls "cosmic" questions. To some of these earnest workers the question as to whether they have ever found a religious experience of "peace" and "happiness" throws them into a rage. What right has a Christian, he asks, to think of his own happiness in a world as bunglingly organized in its social aspects as ours? The only peace, according to this humanist, is that of burning one's self out in the attempt to give the men and women and children now living in the world a better chance. When we see humanists of this stamp taking slander of themselves, loss of position, and even jail sentences as matters of course the most orthodox Christian among us may have a smoldering, uneasy suspicion that the secret of the Lord is with them.

At a grade considerably below these militant humanists are those who serve their fellowmen indeed, but with a predominantly utilitarian scheme of values as their guide. Many such pride themselves on their scientific techniques, which usually means that they desire goods that can be weighed and measured. They work along with routine efficiency, performing useful tasks but without much enthusiasm in themselves or inspiration for others. They have their place. They believe that the doctrine that man does not live by bread alone really means that men ought to have not only bread but also butter and jam. That is to say, they think materialistically throughout.

Next are the humanists who avow that their cutting loose from religion, especially from Christianity, is based on sound science and philosophy. We are all believers in science and philosophy, however, and the question is whether the humanist's philosophy is good, or not so good.

Now the more philosophical humanist has placed the world under obligation by his persistent demand that we think of men as ends in themselves. As profound a philosopher as Kant made this demand one of the foundation stones of his thinking. The demand is splendid when we are confronted by national policies which would make men into war-material, or into stuff to fill out an ideal of a superstate, or when we are beset with industrial systems which would regard men as tools or at most as "hands."

MEN AS ENDS IN THEMSELVES

There is another side to this, however. The philosophic mood is likely to get hold of this humanist. Forthwith he preaches that men are not to look beyond themselves for any objects of worship or of religious contemplation. Here we come upon an inconsistency. The humanist will have it that men are ends in themselves. So far so good, and gloriously good. How strange now that the humanist who sees in man an end in himself will not allow us to think of man as having any "cosmic" significance! Is it an affront to the dignity of man to conceive of his mind and will and love as giving something of a clue to the meaning of the world in which the life of man is lived? If we single out individual persons here and there, we might well say that such a question is not of chief significance. When, however, we reflect upon the fact that ever since the human race began men have been streaming into existence and out of it by millions and indeed by billions, when we take at all seriously the favorite humanistic contention that men are ends in themselves, when we consider that all our values of the good and the true and the beautiful do not mean much apart from the appreciating powers of men's minds, we may well wonder if the Christian teaching about a God who likewise regards men as ends in themselves may not tend to give to man a higher reach of significance than that with which the stricter, tighter humanism can dower him.

Here we come upon a paradox. It seems as if the way to make the most of men is to teach them not to contemplate man taken alone. In teaching the path to individual salvation we say that the seeker must not look too much at himself but away from himself to others who are to share the joys of salvation. It will be remembered that John Wesley interpreted that famous Aldersgate experience in which his heart was "strangely warmed" as the turning point at which he ceased to be centered chiefly on the salvation of his own soul and became concerned with the salvation of his fellowmen. Similarly, in the larger social service of men we have to train a social organism which can look out beyond itself to the vast cosmic conceptions which such a social organism can presumably be brought to grasp.

Is the universe hostile to man, or indifferent, or

friendly? This is an entirely worthy and pertinent question. The final answer will depend on whether the response will affect for good the lives of billions of men. Inasmuch as men in multitudes have always been asking the question it seems rather narrow in the more professedly exact and exacting humanists to forbid it. We repeat that the two biblical commandments are not to be taken apart. It may be well enough for a lover of beauty to seek beauty on its own account, but the beauty of the holiness of the Lord cannot be seen except in the holiness of the relation of the Lord to men.

Is it not true, however, that the greatest social service that can be rendered to men is to give them a better idea of God? Must not the idea of God be looked upon as determining all our attitude toward men, if we are to be fully Christian? Is it not the feeling of eternity, to use the age-old term, that gives value to new life in time? In reply I must insist that I am trying to say that it is not the idea of God that is the chief aim of Christian thinking about God, but the quality of that idea—especially the moral quality. No doubt God can be thought of in terms of abstract theology, as the source of all beauty, as the fount of reason, as the center of all power in the universe.

GOD AS MORALLY RESPONSIBLE

If that is as far as thinking goes, I am not sure that it is especially worthwhile for men to think overmuch of God, *just now*. Just now the main question concerning God is as to whether we can think of him as morally responsible in the use of his power in his dealing with the billion and a half persons supposed to be living at any one time on the face of the earth. Let us withdraw for contemplation—withdraw into desert solitude, if need be, for the sake of fashioning a nobler idea of God, if we do so for the sake of coming out of the desert with that nobler idea taking the form of deeper responsibility on the part of the divine for the right outcome of human affairs. A forthcoming book from the pen of the late Dr. A. C. McGiffert states with inescapable power the claim that the highest form of communion with God is to work together with him. In this working together with God, wrote Dr. McGiffert in his last days, we must make our ethics more social, and doing this will make our religion more personal.

Thirty years ago the pictures of the French painter Tissot, entitled "Scenes from the Life of Christ," were exhibited in this country. I am not qualified to pass on the artistic merit of the paintings, but I shall never forget one scene dealing with what Christ saw from the cross. I had always thought of Christ on the cross as looking far down the future to the triumph of his cause, or as gazing upon the divine redemptive drama of which he himself was the central figure. Tissot made the vision of Christ on the Cross just the procession of human beings—men, women and children, passing into and out from Jerusalem. At what else could he have been looking, if he was to act in harmony with his teaching and his life?

I once heard a saint say that he wished God could reveal himself in a face, so that men might gaze into the depths of the divine eyes. Suppose for a moment that God could make such a revelation of himself and that we could see his face. We might be surprised to discover that the divine gaze was not directed upon us at all, that the gaze was looking through us, or beyond us, out to the men not as favored as ourselves. To come then into real communion with God we should have to turn around and look to the objects at which he was looking. In that common gaze we might begin to commune with God, in a fellowship deepening as we learned to work with him for the largest and best life of our fellowmen.

The Spiritual Basis of Security

By Merton S. Rice

Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God. John 14-1.

THERE is a convincing confidence about that calm word from the lips of Jesus Christ, which a troubled world today will do well to pause before and thoughtfully ponder. We are a troubled generation.

"Let not your heart be troubled!" Why not? we rather sharply reply in the confidence we feel in the well founded reasons for the troubles we experience. Why not? Because you believe in God! There is the force of an unexpected and enheartening discovery of an asset in such a word. We have become used to the listing of "securities" in other terms. It is somewhat startling to be told of values which are ours and which we have not been listing.

Things our civilization has been drilled to put its confidence in have crumbled under us. We have brought down upon our own heads the collapse of much we had come to believe could not collapse. Amid it all, as we rather desperately endeavor to repair a tottered materialism with the application of more materialism, it is assuring to hear a great, simple, calm message in the confident word of one who saw the hidden secret of all security for a troubled race of men and women such as are we.

This is the assumptive attitude of Jesus Christ toward the tyranny of trouble, and I have been thinking that it is a very essential thing to get said in all its implications in this eager, needy, almost despairing hour. The spiritual basis of security—simply this, Ye believe in God! I wonder if our world is not to receive out of this crash of its false securities the reorganization of its confidence. We have been building on the sand. It has amazed us of late, as we have been compelled to see how shifting our foundations are.

I have just come from the office of one of the most thoughtful and successful business men I know who, calling me to his office, has said almost the exact words I have just said, as the profound conviction of his hard tried soul. Things we have believed were unshakable have tottered to their fall. Foundations we have thought were bed-rock have been washed away.

Let not your heart be troubled! Why not? we have been used to replying, and have received the soothing

word, "Because you have stocks and bonds and they are gilt-edged too!" And a light-hearted conviction of security of an easy-going prosperity gave us a false confidence which only glided along to its collapse.

When Jesus spoke about our basis of security he never so much as mentioned the things we had grown confident in. He answered the appealing cry of trouble spiritually, Believe in God! There it stands.

WE BELIEVE IN GOD!

God is available! We need someone to say that impressively now. In the deep darkness a light. In difficulty a deliverance. In sorrow a solace. In loss a profit. In helplessness a help. We believe in God! Oh you stormy winds that blow bleak across this storm-strewn way of ours! You dreary drouth-smitten deserts across whose dead ways we must crawl in desperate depression! You sweeping sorrows through whose stygian darkness we go our stumbling way! God is about! God is about! He will most surely break out in some unexpected place. He will set a song amid our mute moments. He will send a flash at midnight. He will bring up a bloom amid the sands of the desert. He will strike again at Horeb's rock and send out a gushing stream of refreshing. This is God's world! Nothing that man can ever do or undo can set that great fact aside. This is God's world. He holds the guarantee. Take no substitute. Risk no other security. Found every confidence you hold upon that fact.

There appeared a very interesting note on the rugged character of General von Hindenburg in one of the papers shortly after his death. If I apply it here illustratively with a different emphasis than that in which in the news columns it was used, it wears an impressive significance. Hindenburg did typify much of our self-confident age. He bulks now as symbolic in the collapse of his confidence.

A group of newspaper reporters were seeking an interview with him, and one of them as spokesman for the company said: "All your life, General, you have been a man of iron will and self-control. We would like to ask you for the secret of that fact, and to inquire, for the help it may be to others, what do you do when you feel yourself getting nervous?"

"I whistle," replied the great German.

"But, sir, none of us has ever heard you whistle," was the reply.

"Is it possible?" replied the man of iron conduct with feigned surprise, "Now that I come to think about it, neither have I."

THE VOICE OF JESUS

That is a strangely apt incident to find publicity at this time. Von Hindenburg, the very rock of personal confidence, came to know that what man makes, no matter how well he may build, man cannot guarantee. A guarantor is needed. This day of ours, wrestling desperately with the problems of its banks, and determined to find some way by which it can guarantee the trusts men put in each other, is in a position to be preached to upon the real basis of security, the spiritual basis.

Trouble today, as men grade trouble, is deep and plentiful. If our classification is at all correct, we are the recipients of unusual trouble. Let not your heart be troubled! Why not? we almost snarl back at so strange a suggestion. Our banks break! Our factories groan for orders! Our ships rust at their docks! What should we need to wait for before trouble should be acknowledged? Who speaks to us so? Why speaks he so?

Jesus speaks! The reason he gives is crisp and conclusive and without qualification. Because you believe in God! We stop for no explanations. The only substantial basis of security is spiritual. Ye believe in God! The basal reply of all real religious satisfaction—God against it all.

The courage generated by that stupendous fact comes flowing across the ages: out of flaming furnaces, across choking floods, above threatening disaster. The courage of this great spiritual fact has steadied the race.

There are two sure deposits such an experience should provide for all who will accept. The first one is a quiet and undisturbed confidence. The surface ripples across the sea about us may at times be blown into blinding spray before the winds which blow there, but down deeper than all the surface evidences abides the undisturbed calm of a great repose.

THE TESTS OF LIFE

To me the keenest, most penetrating, observation I have heard made by anyone since these challenging days came testingly upon us, was couched in a quiet sort of a reply made by a man who was listening with me to a very bitter word spoken by one because he had been compelled to take some severe losses. As he finished his accusation in the listing of his own distress, one who had quietly listened to it all replied, "What right have you to plead exemption from this depression?" There was no answer. This has been no selective hour. What right could I have to be without the common hurt?

Ye believe in God! Such a foundationing fact should surely bring a calm into our hearts that is not to be disturbed by anything else. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—we preserve the fact in the ancient phrase because we mean that he is not merely the God in general of a whole race, but is the assuring God of the individual. I am not calling for some general belief in an unapproachable fact of creative majesty, even of measureless multitudes or of immeasurable universes. I would let this essential fact concentrate to every individual. I can confidently take this truth with its encouraging hope, and be sure that if he could be the God of some other individuals—of any Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who ever lived—he can also be the God of others, the God of even me.

The moment the real meaning of that settles upon the soul there is a change in the atmosphere of life. A streak of dawn breaks through the black night, from which the maddening cry of "Invictus" may have come, and the notes of a better song come floating out of life. A great, strong, quiet peace settles over the soul if we but believe that the everlasting arms actually enfold us. I contend that we are possessed of the basal matters out of which the calm life is to be built. It is the spiritual basis of security. We may ourselves be the weakest

of the weak. Our religion is however not dependent upon our strength, for in him even such as are we may be, and therefore should be, more than conquerors.

If this be true we must not be afraid to meet the test of the life it shall require, and for which the world looks to us for demonstration. We must present a living confidence in such an outcome.

We are not to draw short conclusions to life in the terms of what we can see here. The very eloquence of many of the so-called failures we estimate here must be found in the fact that we are not finished. If this faltering mortality we bewail so much, whose broken remnants we follow in our solemn marches to the grave,

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were the end of us, the sorrow of incompleteness would rest like a pall across our race.

That is why I dare thus to seek out a place to stand amid what the reckoners of life now dare to call the collapse of values, and speak of the necessity of the spiritual basis.

GOD IS ABOUT!

God is about! "We are winning! We shall win! We are marching! We shall arrive!" Ever ahead of us there are the footprints of him who came to show us the sure way home. I am sure in him. Onward we will press our way, through everything life can ever bring, knowing always that God is about. One victorious day even death will be swallowed up in victory. That will be the final failure of failure. The universe is a success. God is all in all. He is the unshakable spiritual basis of value.

I have become fully convinced that the human problem is primarily and ultimately a religious problem. We never will solve it with material things. You cannot meet the human problem by a mortal approach. The condemning fact of the recent past is that we have sought the solution earnestly in no other direction. Amid all our extravagantly assembled luxury for the eager indulgence of hungry desire, we have still housed just as much misery as our fathers and mothers knew in the more modest days of yesterday. In our supreme progress in things, we have not come any closer to the ultimates of life. The pains of human hearts are just as keen in palaces as in hovels. Death is no less dead in a bronze casket than it was in the days of the old wooden coffin.

NO ESCAPE THROUGH MATERIAL THINGS

The ordinary possessions of all of us ordinary people today would have made the kings of yesterday proud unto distinction. Above every little shack is thrust a sensitive finger to pluck the news out of the very sky, of what the whole world is doing. The man who pushes farthest into the unknown regions yet left on the earth, and hides himself in a storm-blown hole in the snow for months, speaks every day to a whole world of listeners. Yet the human problem is no easier for us than it was for our simpler grandparents. The tables spread for us by our welfare boards today are supplied with things our hardy ancestors who made their living out of the wilderness never so much as heard of. We are better clothed. We are better educated, whatever that means. We know many things no one ever knew before. Much of our boasted knowledge is probably not so, but that need not bother us until it is found out. Better though we be in almost everything we ordinarily list as of value, we are still as much troubled as we have ever been.

We are the easy dupes of the cheap idea that trouble can be escaped by material things. Our mortal side has assumed the mastery. Had our generation spent as much of its genius and wealth and passion in endeavoring to bring itself into the higher things of the spiritual, as it has in seeking out ways of luxurious indulgence for its mortal life, we would not now be in what we call the most serious depression the world has ever known—called a depression, too, not because our fields do not yield richly. The embarrassing fact we have been trying to administer has been a surplus that stands grinning at our hunger. We call it a depression, not because there is not an available market in real human want for everything we have to sell.

I need not trace such a well known fact any further. We are working the wrong way, and we know it. This world will never come to any stable basis of security materialistically. I happened to be in a town recently where some thieves carried away the heavy steel safe from an office. They loaded the prize into a truck and carried it away into some woods where they dumped it out and blew it open with a charge of nitroglycerine. As the big door was compelled to give way and the defended chest was opened they found just one little thin dime. Parable indeed for our day! False security! We have recently been breaking open some very disappointing safes!

WHAT IS TROUBLE?

Let not your heart be troubled! We are due for some drastic changes in what we mean by trouble. I have

read somewhere of an oversensitive voluptuary whose overwrought indulgence in what he called ease registered complaint, and he sent for his valet to remove from his bed of down a crumpled rose leaf that had fallen there. Whose definition of trouble are we to accept as we look hopefully for the relief which Jesus promises by way of belief?

Many of earth's most victorious lives have been those that were full of trouble. What is trouble anyhow? We easily became obsessed of the little things. I saw a ship blanketed in a little fog one day, tooting and tooting as if the whole world was in a fog. We were sailing near, and the way was clear. Make sure you know just what you mean when you dare testify as to the "troubles" which are coming into your life. Are they really troubles, as you compare them with the calamities that have come to many millions of your fellows? Or are they in fact only tiny little frets and inconveniences?

Mankind has come along down the long ages companioning with troubles. Faith has never faltered amid them. No flood of trouble today, or any other day, will ever persuade us that the scheme of things under which we live is a farrago of nonsense. The Latin has a phrase that has come far, laden with experience. "Deus absconditus"—a God who hides himself and yet discloses himself to the human soul—is a faith we cherish, and no matter how difficult the evidence of that fact may be at times to trace, the presence of it remains deep within us.

Christ The Word

By Lynn Harold Hough

The Word became flesh. John 1:14.

NO end of villages and towns and cities cluster about that strange and vital metropolis which bears the name New York. If you go driving through thirty or forty miles of these hives of human habitation any night during Christmas week you seem to be passing through a magic world. It is not the brightness of the sky or the shining cleanness of the snow. It is the endless series of trees in front of the houses, whose pine branches are shining with bright lights of many colors. It is the gay beauty of the Christmas trees seen through the windows in house after house. It is the vivid loveliness of the wreaths of red and green with bright lights shining upon them. As you pass from city to city and from town to town, unless your mind has been corrupted so that you are only contented as you find something sordid at the heart of every loveliness, you find yourself strangely thrilled. Perhaps you stop near some group of young carolers with faces sharply outlined and eyes shining and voices edging the night with beauty. Perhaps you follow men and women and children of eager feet as they carry mysterious packages to friends whose lives they would enrich, and to lonely and darkened spots where there are lives which may be suffused with brightness and hope.

If you know something of the callous sordidness of which human nature is capable, you look upon this Christmas passion full of the poetry of friendliness with a wistful joy. What if this bright and beautiful thing could be made permanent? What if Christmas trees could be kept blooming in human hearts all the year round? What if this friendly concern for human beings could make itself felt in every human relationship, and in all the social edifice of human life? What is the power which has released all this bright and wistful beauty upon the world? Is Christmas just a lovely emotion or is there a fact back of the emotion? And if a fact there is, can we believe that this fact is great enough to transform all the relations of men?

A FACT, THEN A FAITH

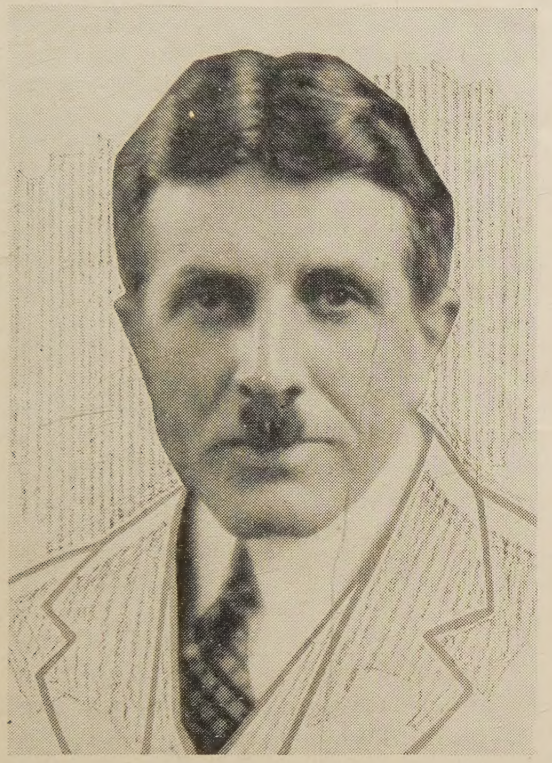
The answer of the fourth gospel—and it is the answer of twenty centuries of gracious and potent experience—is very explicit: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Christmas was a fact before it became a faith. And it was a faith before it became a flaming and friendly emotion kindling lights in human hearts all about the world. Every Christmas candle brings its light from a manger where a tiny babe lay beside its mother centuries ago. The Sistine Madonna has caught the secret of this strange and majestic child. In those deep and mysterious eyes you see a fathomless meaning which is glorious with the sense of eternity, and splendid with the ineffable majesty of the divine. When all this becomes rhetoric the candles stop burning. When all this becomes phrases with no conviction at the heart of them the glowing passes out of human hearts. This life so stained by sensuality, so torn by selfishness, so brutalized by cruelty, is startled into strange and glorious spiritual insight as men utter with anything like conviction the great sentence: "The Word became flesh."

Centuries were required to enshrine the meaning of these words in the mind of the world. Centuries were required to build these words into the conscience of the world. Centuries were required to set the cadences of this lofty speech ringing in the heart of the world. The lovely serenity of the Christmas spirit now seems to exist almost in its own right. But really it is a tree—a great Christmas tree—which cannot be severed from its roots and continue to live. You cannot keep the Christmas spirit and cast away the fact upon which the observance of Christmas is based. The faith creates the fealty which flowers in the fulness of the Christmas spirit. And if Christmas should go much would go with it. Social hopes which seem a thousand miles from the manger of Bethlehem will shrivel up and die, if the Christmas fact ceases to be a living reality mastering the mind, commanding the conscience, flaming in the heart and glowing in the will of mankind.

GOODNESS IS ETERNAL

The Christmas flowers will all wither if we cease to believe in the Christmas facts. And a cold chill of hard and sordid selfishness will paralyze the mind, congeal the heart, stultify the conscience and crush out the good will of the world. That tiny sentence "The Word became flesh" has as its cargo of meaning the treasure which will make some sort of real good possible for all the world.

When men and women fail to live up to the height of great words we have two alternatives before us. On the one hand we may cast out the words with a grim realism which at last almost insists that only a vocabulary of swine is suitable for a world like ours. On the other hand, with a noble and daring realism (in the almost lost sense of the ages of faith), we may insist that virtue never falls though men cease to be virtuous, that beauty never dies though men join a vast cult for the worship of the ugly, that goodness is eternal though men grovel in evil. We may insist that we will keep our great words though they rebuke us and condemn us, and crush our complacency, and haunt us by splendid hopes which seem impracticable and which yet are inescapable.



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If the Word was made flesh, then all flesh may be made the instrument of the Word. The unholy and bitter cruelty of lawless lust is condemned by the insistent realism of the one great fact of the incarnation if indeed the Word was made flesh. All individual lives built about selfish and adroit cunning and the hot passion of lawless desire are confronted with a great and radiant possibility of dazzling moral magnificence if indeed the Word was made flesh. All social powers bitter with dishonesty and injustice, and the exploitation of the weak by the strong, confront a universe whose very central life and reality defies them and sets forth to overthrow them if indeed the Word was made flesh and that Word is articulate in the speech and glorious in the life of Jesus Christ.

BELIEF IN A GOOD GOD

Is it not an odd thing that some bitter and lying cynicism should be allowed to whisper in our ears that the life of time may be made a more glorious thing if we have no convictions about eternity? Is it not a thing almost passing belief that we should suppose that new and mighty forces for social reconstruction will at once be released in our lives if we just cast away that belief in the incarnation which alone lifts our social dreams from the realm of absurdity into the region of authentic power? With hard and grim human wills to break from their arrogant selfishness, and entrenched evil to conquer all about the world, is it not a thing of bitter marvelousness that we should cast away that belief in the Great Good God of conscious ethical love entering human life in all the glory of the incarnation—that one belief which gives security to the high thought that the divine may potently express itself in the human, may bend the human to its purposes, and turn the human to the way of its own good and glorious and friendly will?

The grim and lonely homes upon which no light shines, the grimmer and lonelier lives without moral and spiritual hopes or social expectation—the human clods blind to beauty and goodness, hard with the pressure of all the uncounted evils of this sordid and cruel world—need above everything else the assurance of an invading compassion, an adventurous and tender friendliness, an eternal good will which finds them in their last refuge of disillusionment and pain, strong in the virility of the might of God, torn with a pain which is nothing less than the suffering love of God. Only the Word made flesh can give any sort of hope in a world as grim and ugly and hard and sordid as ours.

AN INVADING COMPASSION

The human beings who attempt to bear the bitter burden of the world will sink to the level from which they would lift men unless that strange great glory of the incarnation makes them strong. Only the strong Son of God really keeps the wolves from the door. And only the strong love of God can give us the leaders and the assurances and the inner security in which we can fight with any permanent and authentic hope for a better world.

We can turn with ugly cynicism if we will from the many colored lights of the little trees of Christmas in front of the quiet homes of our cities and villages. We may scorn a sentiment which is so easily contented with a gesture when it ought to change a world. Or we may see in the very conventions which remind us of the ages of faith a symbol of a reality which may rise to capture men's allegiance and to master the world. The tiniest Christmas tree tells of a faith red with the blood of martyrs, rich with the confidence of those heroes who have confronted grim and ugly human facts by the divine facts which make all things new, the one faith without which this torn and broken world has no good or noble future, the one faith which can turn selfishness into devotion, evil into good, and can call from the grave the social hopes whose death has been the darkest tragedy of the modern world.

The highest hopes of the individual and the loftiest expectations of society meet in authentic power in the life of the man who can utter with conviction the ancient declaration: "The Word became flesh."

'Let Us Alone!'

By Edwin Holt Hughes

There was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit: and he cried out, saying, Let us alone. Mark 1, 23, 24.

THOSE of us who are fairly mature have doubtless been in a church service which was interrupted in some unseemly way. The very solemnity of the sanctuary makes ridiculous things more ridiculous; while the quiet of the worship hour makes more loud the voice that is foreign to the mood. Even when Jesus was delivering his first public message there came such a break in the order. The hush that had settled upon the listening people was broken by a wild cry. The startled hearers turned toward a man, perhaps well known in the village—a man tortured with a strange spell. In the language of that distant century he was "possessed of an evil spirit."

Most of us refuse to be dogmatic about the nature of demonic possession. Some say that it was a violent epilepsy which struck the victim and laid him prone in writhing agony. Others say that it was a species of roaring insanity which made its subject a terror to men and condemned him to desolate tombs or to binding chains. Yet others say that it was a distinct form of malady, just as literally described, but which has passed from the moral world as certain beasts have passed from the animal world. Doubtless an assured diagnosis would do far more for curiosity than it would for conscience. So we may well decline to join the guessers in ancient psychopathy!

But, broadly speaking, the incident may be taken to represent the antagonism of Christ to evil of whatever sort. Be the ground of the trouble moral or physical, the mercy of the Lord sets itself for a cure. There is thus given a revelation of Jesus himself. There is also given a revelation of the shrewd demands which evil insists on making. Inasmuch as wickedness is incarnate it is not always easy to decide upon our attitude. It is difficult to "pierce between the sinner and his sins"; to love him while hating his deeds; to fight a man's actions while seeking to keep peace with the man's soul. One thing that makes it harder is the fact that evil advances specious claims and is a wily debater for its own alleged rights. It is not wise, then, to dismiss this incident in the Nazareth synagogue as a remote and outdated thing. On its surface it was timely; that is, it belonged in its truth or in its superstition to its own immediate day. In its depth it was timeless; that is, it belongs to the autumn of 1934 and is sure to pass on into coming seasons.

I

First of all, evil made then and makes now the apparently innocent claim of the right to be let alone. All the modern translators—Goodspeed, Weymouth, Moffatt—leave that demand intact. The wicked spirit everywhere not only wants nothing to do with God but it wants God to have nothing to do with it—shrieking out, "What have you to do with us?" No kind of sin is ever patient under interference. The slightest attempt to drive it from its usurped place is answered by the claim of its own liberty. It is adept in using the catchword of freedom.

Personal evil makes this demand. The small child in the nursery wails its protest, "Let me alone." The young man is impatient even of kindly warning and is ready to retort with emphasis, "Let me alone." Middle age, set in the frame of its own habits, says stubbornly, "Let me alone." Old age, trembling along the final slopes of iniquity, says, "Let me alone." Indeed, the case may become so subtle that we scarcely allow ourselves to interfere with ourselves. Our worst part says to our best part, "Let me alone." Our sins are always pleading for immunity. They are good advocates, and they specialize in defending criminals! When we approach them in the spirit and company of Christ the outcry is: "Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—God's Holy One." "Let us alone."

It is so, as well, in our social and national life. Some of our near and dear ancestors said of slavery: "Let us alone. You do not need to hold slaves yourselves. But do not interfere with us." The Louisiana lottery said: "You need not buy our tickets; but do not be bigoted in estopping the liberty of others to gamble." The beverage liquor traffic says: "We do not ask you to frequent our saloons or our 'taverns.' But you must not close our doors to others." This last-named plea has won its disastrous victory in recent days over men and women who, being aware of the "evil spirits" as the defilers of life's temple, have still yielded to its hoarse and coarse demand, "Let us alone." We are discovering with frightful speed that *it* will do nothing of the sort! It will not stay "alone." It will hunt us out with the seven other spirits as comrades; and God pity us in our last state!

LAISSEZ-FAIRE IN INDUSTRY

In the social and economic realm we meet a like demand for non-interference. The Russian situation has given many men the shivers, to such an extent that their judgments are nervous. If a preacher makes the incontrovertible remark that Christian principles should be applied in industry, the startled semi-capitalistic hearers are quick to classify the pulpiteer as a socialist, a communist, or even as an anarchist! He is told to devote himself to "the gospel," and to "let us alone." If, on the other hand, he condemns the violence of strikers or the dynamite explosions that wreck bridges and buildings, he is apt to be told to "let us alone" in equally vigorous idioms! It is difficult to judge as to which counsel calls for the greater courage.

Even in the case of civic immorality the call for the "let-alone" attitude becomes importunate. The signal illustration was given by the late Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst though he has had many less conspicuous companions in heroism. When the plucky clergyman fired his broadside at the camp of the evil spirits, the keep-aloof order arose in a chorus. Thieving commissioners at once became solicitous for the reputation of the Christian pulpit. The minister must keep quiet because he is ignorant—a claim that was duly answered by Dr. Parkhurst's cluster of affidavits. But more, he must stay out of that vital region because as a herald he is

concerned only with the preaching of the gospel, and the gospel must accord with the prescription of the evil-doers themselves! Is it an exaggeration to say that no attempt has been made in many years to exalt Christ as the governor of a city's life without quickly evoking the cry, "Let us alone"?

Two things make the plea a specious one. In our country we are worshipers of liberty. The word is in the air; it is our *Zeitgeist.* And, besides, the claim for non-resistance on our part sounds innocent. Yet it is really a brutal demand. All evils thrive on simple neglect. Weeds say, "Let us alone"; and they capture the acres. Contagions say, "Let us alone," and they kill

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the thousands. Gypsy moths say, "Let us alone," and they murder the elms and maples and lay the lovely forests in waste. The iniquitous moving pictures say, "Let us alone," and then they exalt the bandit and glorify the adulteress. In all realms where possible evils work, our neglect means their success. Our non-interference means their interference. Doubtless men with a vast moral passion may themselves become wild, like the evil spirit in the synagogue; and they may appear one-sided and raucous and bitter in their speech; but we plead for no crazy campaigns in the insistence that we cannot heed the demand of the cohorts of wickedness when they say to Christ or his colleagues, "Let us alone."

II.

But evil makes another plea, and one even harder to resist than the first. It claims an identification with human life. Even if the Greek original does not show the "us" in its terse demand, it does show the plural first person in the heart of the passage. "What have *we* to do with thee?" Commentators often refer to the strange way in which the evil spirit mixed himself with the man he possessed, introducing into a twisted consciousness a frightful dualism. In the biblical descriptions the man speaks, and the spirit speaks, and then they both speak, until the two personalities seem to have but one voice. In this case the protest coming from an apparent *one* represented *two,* welded into single feeling and saying "us" and "we."

Here again the incident becomes a parable. Evil is evermore claiming to be an essential part of the stuff of life. The plea is the harder to gainsay because evil is often perverted good. There is an old and true story of a bird which flew into a lake and was drowned because the lake mirrored the blue of the sky! The lower thing so closely resembled the upper thing as to take on a seeming identity. Every virtue has a vice that appears as a close relative. How difficult it is to distinguish diplomacy from deceit; shrewdness from trickery; self-respect from vanity; economy from stinginess; profit from usury! The border-lines of moral feeling seem sometimes to be so blurred that even honest vision finds trouble in locating them.

The difficulty is again increased because the legitimate and the illegitimate frequently come into an alliance so intimate as to appear almost vascular. Evil identifies itself with good interests and gives insistence to the appeal, "Let us alone." It is not easy to attack the trade in bad movies without warring upon the trade in good films. We are enjoined by the old figure of speech from burning up the house in order to get rid of the rats, until we are made to believe that the rats are the rafters, or even the foundations which rats undermine! Practically all the great social evils seek to identify themselves with normal and natural feelings or institutions. Knowing well that indignation would smite them quickly if they stood out black and stark in their own identity, they barricade themselves behind the bulwark of something that is good, and even necessary. This gives the evils a chance to stand amid protecting companionships and cry out, "Let *us* alone."

GAMBLING AND LIQUOR

A review of our present problems will show how true this is. The gambling evil is coming upon us like a plague. In the old days the Louisiana lottery defended itself behind the Mississippi dykes, saying: If you shut us out you will let in the river's flood. More than that, it allied itself with the element of legitimate chance that appears to affect all good trade! Just now our states are actually giving gambling a legal standing—on the pleas of revenue and inevitability—saying that since men will gamble anyhow it is better that the state should reap the profit! Thus Illinois and Indiana allow gambling to say, "Let us alone."

So it is with our present liquor debacle. Abraham Lincoln is said to have feared high excise taxes because they might serve as bribes in the perpetuation of a bad trade. Just now liquor surrounds itself with hotels and their custom; rents for real estate; sale of glassware; lumber for barrels and kegs; wages for workers; capital for investment in breweries and distilleries; and, most of all, by exaggerated piles of saved taxes—and

then gives the old appeal of non-interference. In the long run the crusade against this evil traffic will face not only a fierce appetite for stimulants but a fiercer appetite for gain for all its so-called allied industries. It is precisely that plea that has in these near months brought back a dreadful scourge into the life of our people; and all future efforts at restriction or prohibition will evoke the hoarse cry of the wicked invader of our national sanctuary, "Let *us* alone."

The appeal is no less insistent when an attack is made upon the fragments of a system that may not be essentially wicked. Many who are not persuaded that a regulated profit motive is an evil in itself, or that private property is an iniquity, may yet feel strongly that there are in our economic life evil spirits that must be exorcised in the name of Christ. It is no attack upon our economic order, as such, to declare that millions in profits are inconsistent with wages of starvation; or that no one span of life is adequate for the righteous gathering of inconceivable fortunes; or that our social régime should provide for a better distribution of material comforts. Neither is it a trespass upon an everlasting legitimacy to declare the refrain of the Scriptures that riches possess deceitfulness; that the love of money is the root of all possible evil; and that the man who makes gold his god has as little chance of entering the kingdom of God as has the camel of entering the needle's eye.

ENEMIES OF "THE SYSTEM"

Yet the prophet who inveighs against the evils of the system is quickly classified as the enemy of the system. In truth, he may be its best friend! In spite of that, the defenders of privilege are ready to charge him with cutting out all the tissues of life in order to get rid of the cancerous growths. They bulwark themselves behind the undoubted accomplishments of the system and resist an ethical onslaught against its wicked incidentals. Sometimes we must all think that Christ comes upon the most persistent evil spirits as he walks through the world's market-places—to meet new Judases with their pieces of silver, or new Simon Maguses with their attempted bribery of the Holy Ghost. The owners of the Gadarene swine, and Demetrius the silversmith, and the exploiters of the demoniac girl in Philippi have their modern successors. Men who desire to be really Christian in their attitude toward property should not resist the Savior or his servants by refusing to recognize the imps of their trade and by crying out for the defense of an evil alliance, "Let us alone."

We know too much of Christ to believe that he will heed this type of plea. He is the great intruder. He is the marvelous exorciser. Evil spirits are always made uneasy when he comes. If he is not equal to casting them out, we have no hope for our civilization. Those who walk in his fellowship through the sanctuaries of the modern world need to assert boldly in the face of all wickedness that they have found a Lord who is the tormentor of all tormenting spirits and the assured Savior of those who would cleanse the temple of its iniquities in order that they may make it the home of the infinite purity of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Men and Their Shadows

By Ralph W. Sockman

That at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some one of them. Acts. 5:15.

On a certain day, in the city of Jerusalem, a considerable stir was being created by a company of men. A few days before they had been frightened fugitives slipping through the back streets, eager to escape. Their leader had been crucified and their enterprise had collapsed. But the turn of events had transformed them into outspoken heralds of a triumphant Christ. Publicly they were proclaiming the power of their risen Lord with such force that crowds were flocking to hear them. Some citizens were selling their property to join the disciples' undertaking. Many were bringing their sick to receive the healing potency which the apostles were thought to possess. On this particular day a throng had assembled in Solomon's porch to see what wonders the comrades of Jesus might work. The people even brought the invalids into the streets and laid them on beds and couches that, as the record puts it, "at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some one of them." The very shadow of Peter was supposed to have a healing power.

It may be hard for us in our day to imagine how men could once have believed that the shadow of a person's body partook of his personality. That idea does still linger in some quarters of the globe, but not among those of us who think that we understand the phenomena of light. Nevertheless, when we lift this thought from the level of a man's physique to the plane of his whole personality, we see that his shadow is symbolically suggestive of something deeply significant.

Peter, that day in Jerusalem, was supposed to be extending his force in two directions: one toward the objectives on which he was purposefully bent; the other toward those persons on whom he let his shadow unconsciously fall. Similarly each of us is at all times extending his personality in those same two directions. It is this relationship between our planned activity and our unplanned influence which we would consider today.

While this is an old theme, there is a contemporary situation which gives it new warrant to arrest our minds. That situation is this: there is a modern mood of independence which makes us increasingly resistant to the planned intentions of others, but there is a modern fact of interdependence which makes us ever more responsive to their unconscious influence.

DIRECT APPEAL UNPOPULAR

The first fork of this two-pronged truth may be felt in every circle of association from the nursery up to the NRA. The moment we suspect that someone else is trying to influence us, we begin to steel ourselves against the invasion. When a father deliberately and ostentatiously announces to his young son, "I'll show you how you should behave," that offspring is quite likely to show his father how he should not behave. Teachers in the classroom can no longer take the old schoolmaster attitude of "handing down" rules of conduct or even facts of information. Professors and pupils now regard them-

selves as fellow-seekers after truth in pursuing projects. In fact, on some campuses the spirit of freedom has swung so far from any fascism of faculty that it has tended toward a sovietism of sophomores.

The agencies of public opinion are forced to recognize this resistance to direct appeal. A few years ago one of our great New York newspapers, the World, ceased publication. Several explanations of its demise were given. One very suggestive theory was that the paper failed to hold its readers because it emphasized its editorial page—one of the best in the country—to the neglect of its news columns. Said the critic: People wish to know what is going on in the world, but they do not

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want to be told what they should think about it. The reading public offers to the editors of today no such docile domain for regal sway as once was exercised by the pen of Greeley or Dana or Watterson. Our age has been so deluged with advertising and so beset by propaganda that we are now experiencing the law of diminishing returns in these activities.

In the church the same independence of thought has to be faced. When a preacher thunders out his dicta in dogmatic fashion, a cultured congregation may be courteous enough to sit through his sermon, but mentally it will walk out on him. A minister may still be called the shepherd of his flock but his parishioners do not regard themselves as sheep and will not tolerate being treated as such. Hence mass evangelism is being found effective in fewer and fewer places, and the per capita cost of worship and church recruiting is rising toward prohibitive heights. In short, amid the din of propaganda, our contemporaries have been growing more and more deaf to the calls of direct appeal, until many despair of the pulpit's future.

But while this mental independence is closing the ears of men to the conscious efforts of influence, there is an interdependence of life and thought which is opening the avenues of indirect influence. What we call atmosphere was never so subtly penetrating as it is today.

Such observations should serve to remind us of Jesus' own method. We who are immersed in church work think so much in terms of programs that we often forget where the original contagion of Christianity was found. Jesus came with a program for a kingdom of God—the most magnificent program ever conceived. But he did not dash up and down Palestine as a man tensely bent on establishing a program. John the Baptist did. But the Master's methods were so unlike John's that the latter began to doubt the messiahship of the other. Jesus went about healing men by the side of the road, mingling with guests at weddings, stopping to soothe the mourners in stricken homes. The shadow of his influence fell on a woman by the well and her life was changed. His shadow in passing reached to an outcast Zaccheus and brought salvation to the publican's house. Jesus, the gentleman, stood in the presence of a woman about to be stoned for her sin. It would have been a good occasion to proclaim his kingdom platform on purity. But Jesus did not preach. For a time he did not even talk. He simply stooped and drew designs in the sand. Yet his shadow so overshadowed the Magdalene and her accusers that the crowd melted away and the woman's sin with it.

THE METHOD OF JESUS

When we look at Jesus we do not get the impression of a candidate campaigning for votes or a reformer rushing through a program. His personality overshadowed his program. We see this when we try to sum up his power in terms of departmentalizing, professional words. Jesus was the world's premier preacher, but we do not adequately describe him when we call him a pulpiteer. Jesus was a teacher towering above all others in effectiveness, but it is not enough to call him a professor or a pedagogue. Jesus worked such fundamental reforms that our calendars turn on his birth as the hinge of history, but we certainly do not reflect the gospel portrait when we use the word reformer. No, so far did Jesus' shadow of influence overflow his "program" that professional words are inadequate. There is only one word roomy enough to sum up the work of Jesus. He was the Man of Nazareth, and the shadow of his manhood is so lasting that millions of us are convinced that it reaches even into divinity.

This first emphasis of Christianity's Founder must be recovered for Christianity's future. Those who resist shouts of direct appeal will feel the shadow of Peter's successors passing by.

Now if our shadows of influence are increasingly important, it follows that we must be more intelligently and insistently concerned about them. We recognize, of course, that we are responsible for our intentions; but how far are we accountable for our influence? If a man goes out and indulges himself in a form of pleasure which he feels is not harmful to himself and then another following his example starts on a course of indulgence which he proves unable to control, how far is

the first person blamable for his fellow's behavior? If a man with honest motives insists on the right to manage his money without social interference, and another seeing his independence demands the same freedom of action which he then uses for dishonest ends, how far is the first responsible for the unsocial results?

Such questions catapult us into a whole meshwork of considerations and we feel inclined to say that in our complex society all that can be expected of a man is to "mind his own business" and let others do the same. But second thought shows us that this matter of "minding one's own business" is becoming more and more impossible. Suppose that I am the owner of a plot of ground here at the heart of Manhattan Island. Inasmuch as the ground is mine, with only the blue sky above it, I shall proceed to build on it as high as I please. But the city says: "No, you must limit the height of your building, for you must consider the shadow which you cast." All right, then, I shall make use of my property by digging down until I strike gas and have my own fuel. But the city answers: "No, you can not drill for gas here in the center of New York, for you must have regard for the atmosphere you release." If this plot of mine were on the open prairie, I could go as high and as deeply as I desired, but the value of the property would hardly make it worth while. For what makes the value of this corner in Manhattan? Partly, the fact that so many people wish to live around it, but also the fact that those who do dwell around it are required to control the shadow which they cast and the atmosphere which they release. It is the restrictions of a zone which add to the worth of its real estate.

DEMOCRACY AND SELF-CONTROL

This is a point which the advocates of personal liberty and economic *laissez faire* fail to see. The consideration on which our liberty rests is the considerateness of men for one another. The distinguishing mark of a democracy, especially of a Christian society, is that the individual member secures his freedom from encroachment by restraining his liberty from trespassing on others. The "rugged individualists" who demand the right to do as they please defeat their end by doing as they please. That course leads to social anarchy which is the negation of freedom.

But even our social legislation will fail of its purpose unless safeguarded by more concern for personal influence and responsibility. We are setting up so many social controls in the interest of the individual, but we are not developing apace our individual self-control in the interest of society. And what is the result? We adopt business codes and then weaken them by chiseling. We pile up a huge government overhead, and then undermine its effectiveness by personal irresponsibility. How much farther can this go on before collapse ensues? Systems, however socialized, can not save us. Codes, however Christian, can be made to work only by men with the Galilean's regard for their own self-control which includes their shadows of influence.

When Paul Robeson was a member of the football squad at Rutgers, a game was scheduled with a southern university. Upon learning that a Negro was to be lined up against them, the visiting players served notice that they would not go on the field. The Rutgers captain replied that his team would either play with Robeson or not at all. Whereupon the game began in none too good a spirit. The opposing players made it as hard as possible for the Negro. But Robeson did not retaliate. He played a clean game without any rancor. When the contest was over, a delegation from the southern squad came to the Rutgers dressing room and called for the Negro. In manly, straightforward fashion they offered their apologies and told him that they considered him as "white" a gentleman as they had ever played against. What changed the attitude of those men and transformed the spirit of that game? No football code or regulations could have done it. It was the sportsmanlike spirit of a gentlemanly player casting the shadow of his influence.

Unless we can spread more widely such a spirit of personal self-control, the game of living together will continue to be a battle of individualists, however carefully we may plan our society.

INTENTIONAL PROPAGANDA

And now if our Christian duty bids us be more concerned about our shadows of conscious influence, how can we give attention to them without spoiling their effectiveness? If we go about ever conscious of our influence, then we destroy its value by making it a sort of intentional propaganda, which, as we said in the beginning, is unwelcome to our generation. If a parent or a teacher moves about always mindful of how she is affecting those around her, she does little good to them and is in danger of becoming a moral prig herself.

Moreover, the person who is ever watching his shadow is likely to become afraid of his shadow. The preacher who looks over his congregation wondering how this member or that will take his sermon is prone to put the silencer on his prophetic notes. Like one minister of whom I have heard, he may give his people a steady "diet of boneless chicken stewed in cream." To fasten our attention on our own shadows of influence tends to weaken their force and destroy their welcome.

How then can we control without counteracting our influence? By adjusting ourselves to the source of light. It is the relationship of a body to the radiating center of light which determines the shadow cast. Similarly it is by getting our bearings in relation to him who was called the Light of the World that we can control our shadow of influence without a self-defeating self-consciousness.

To say that is not to repeat the hackneyed formula, "Get right with God and you will be right with men." That is so often said by those who want others to accept their own special idea of God. Men have thought they were getting right with God and yet were damnably wrong in their relationship to men. A German kaiser talked piously about *"Gott mit uns"* when he was sending his subjects out to be slaughtered. Spanish inquisitors went out with swords and torches to bring men to God, but it was to their kind of God. Unthinking preachers and unsocial church pillars piously assert that all we need to cure our depression is for men to "get back to God," meaning thereby the God who is the patron saint of prosperity.

The shadow of Peter passing by was supposed to have a healing power for the sick fear-ridden persons who lined his way. The record does not say that it did. But the records do reveal that the disciples of Christ have cast curative shadows of influence in the centuries since. And never was this more needed than in our frightened world of today.

About a year ago I was required to make a night flight from the city of Duluth to the city of Winona. I was on a new and untried local plane. The northern Minnesota woods seemed to offer no safe landing places. Riding as a lone passenger through the darkness unbroken by beacon lights, I had just one source of confidence. That was the profile of the pilot which I could see limned against the luminous dashboard of the motor. As long as I could see that his face was calm, I kept cool. His shadow overshadowing me gave me the courage that I needed. So on our dark journey of today may the successors of Peter so place themselves before the Light of the World that their shadows shall serve to keep men unafraid.

The Might of a Minority

By Ernest Fremont Tittle

Isaiah, 53.

ALMOST certainly Isaiah's suffering servant is not an individual; he is a nation personified. A nation that had suffered as had no other in antiquity. A people that had endured an Egyptian bondage and was now enduring a Babylonian exile. A race despised and rejected of men, but which, thanks to its spiritual insight, its moral passion and its amazing courage, was destined to make an immortal contribution to the enfranchisement and upliftment of mankind.

But was it of the whole nation that Isaiah was thinking when he wrote this immortal passage? It is difficult to believe that it was. Concerning the majority of his countrymen the first Isaiah had exclaimed: "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that deal corruptly!" And he had added: "Except Jehovah of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, we should have been like unto Gomorrah." Was it not this very small remnant, this brave, far-seeing minority, whom the second Isaiah had in mind when he portrayed his suffering servant? Concerning the majority of his countrymen he, too, appears to have had no illusions. "Justice is obliged to turn away defeated. Right is forced to hold aloof. For truth in our assemblies has no footing. Honesty cannot enter there. Truth is never seen there, and moral sense has left the town."

That is not a description of New York's Tammany hall or of Chicago's school board. It is Isaiah's description of politics in his own community. It is his moral judgment upon the ruling classes of his own nation. Is it not, therefore, very unlikely that it was the whole nation which he had in mind? Was it not rather some brave, devoted, long-suffering minority whom he personified as a servant of the Most High, despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief but destined at last to see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied?

"Enemies of Society"

In any event, this fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is a profound description of the suffering and service of the prophetic minority in history. One and all, in varying degrees, prophetic minorities are characterized by extraordinary vision, by moral sensitivity, by magnificent devotion to something greater than self; and one and all in varying degrees they are made to suffer. Daring to think and live ahead of their time, they appear to their unseeing contemporaries to be wicked heretics, dangerous radicals, damnable demagogues, enemies of society. "The administration shines like the moon by reflected light. It borrows its ideas and its policies, if it has any, from crazy radicals. By surrendering to their wild and reckless guidance, it is ruining the country." That is not a description of the Brain Trust. It is taken from an editorial which appeared in the New York World in the spring of the year 1863—an editorial which had specific reference to a now famous Proclamation of Emancipation.

Prophetic minorities—they are called in derision "Christians," "Quakers," "Methodists," "Abolitionists," "Black Republicans," "Pacifists." What haven't you been called, you prophetic minorities who have been at once the disturbance and the glory of history? You have been despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. As one from whom men hide their face you have been ostracized, cast out and condemned. But the future belonged to you. Despised and rejected of your contemporaries, by those who came after you you were hailed as prophets and pioneers. Names which to you were applied in derision, in bitterness and in hate, have become titles of respectability. It is now considered respectable to be a Christian, honorable to be a Quaker; and blessed is he who can point to at least one great grandfather who was a d—d abolitionist!

This fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is a profound description of the trials and triumph of prophetic minorities and as such I commend it to anyone who today finds himself a member of a small group, apparently feeble, none too popular, that is striving as best it may to secure some more glorious tomorrow.

Prophets and Posterity

There are, I suspect, two questions which members of such a group are bound sometimes to ask, at least in their own hearts. Suppose we do risk the seen for the unseen; suppose we do surrender much which we ourselves might have and enjoy in hope that those who come after us will have a little more to enjoy. Will those who come after us prove worthy of the sacrifice which we have made in their behalf? We do not ask, Will they remember us? It is not necessary that they should remember us, but it certainly is desirable that they should have some decent regard for those dearly bought gains which we have managed to secure for them.

After our fathers at great cost had brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty

and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created free and equal, one of them apostrophized posterity—John Adams, who exclaimed, "Posterity! You will never know how much it cost the present generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make a good use of it. If you do not, I shall repent it in heaven that I ever took half the pains to preserve it." Will those who come after us be concerned to preserve those dearly bought gains which we have managed to secure for them? Who knows? The answer probably is that some of them will, some of them will not. But even though we had reason to suspect that none of them would, what else could we do, we who see certain wrongs that ought to be righted and certain rights that ought to be achieved? What else could we do, save give all we had to the righting of those wrongs, the achieving of those rights? Must we not in any event be true to ourselves—and to God? After all, we are not obliged to live with those who come after us, but we are obliged to live with ourselves. How can we live at peace with ourselves unless we are obedient to that heavenly vision of truth and right which has been granted us?

Is It a Dream?

There is, however, another question which sometimes rises in our minds and disturbs our hearts. Or is it, perhaps, the same question in another and more searching form? One sometimes wonders whether the hope of a better world is anything more than a compensatory dream. Finding our actual world too painful to live in, too full of cruelty and stupidity, some of us dream dreams. We dream of a better world in which cruelty and stupidity shall be no more, neither shall there be poverty nor unemployment nor war any more. And then we try to persuade ourselves that this more satisfying world of our dreams is destined some day to become a blessed actuality. But is it? Today, twenty years after the shot was fired which precipitated the World War in which nearly thirty millions of human beings were wiped out, we appear to be heading for another war in which civilization may possibly be wiped out.

Is it anything more than a compensatory dream, this hope of a better world? To be sure, even though we had no expectation of success, we might decide to carry on anyhow in the belief that it is better to go down fighting for an unrealizable ideal than it is to go on consenting to an outrageous actuality. But in that event, all we could hope for would be the achievement of a little peace in our own souls; and try as we might to keep away from it, we could hardly avoid a growing and sickening sense of utter futility. We do need to believe that labor for a better world is not in vain, that devoted servants of the ideal will one day see of the travail of their souls and be satisfied.

Well, there is, I think, a good deal to encourage us. The notion that there has been any real progress during the past two thousand years George Bernard Shaw pronounces too absurd for discussion. Then he proceeds to discuss it at considerable length. But after everything has been admitted that really needs to be admitted concerning what Shaw calls "the barbarism, savagery, dark ages and all the rest of it" and of which he claims that it is with us still, there is something else to be said. True, many of the stark realities of our time are not far different from certain stark realities two thousand years ago. There is, however, one very significant difference, for in the ancient world these deplorable realities were not generally deplored, whereas in our world they are being deplored by growing numbers of people.

In Plato's "Republic" the word "slavery" does not occur, but the thing itself, the institution, is admitted. To Plato's mind human slavery appeared to be inevitable, and not only inevitable but legitimate. Plato could not imagine a world without slavery. Numbers

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of us can and do. We are obliged to admit that slavery in some form is with us still. There are today millions of men who are pitifully dependent upon other men for their chance to live and labor, inasmuch as they neither own nor control the indispensable tools of production. But growing numbers of us refuse to believe that this condition is either just or inevitable. We are choosing to believe that a better society than that which we now have can be built upon the earth. We can at least imagine a society in which no man will be pitifully dependent upon other men for his chance to live and labor. War, also, is with us still, and in a very horrible form. Yet who today does not deplore war? And who today, excepting only the most cynical and hardboiled of militarists, would be willing to subscribe to the proposition that war is inevitable? When it comes to war, you have an ancient evil but you have also a new attitude which is indeed profoundly significant and encouraging.

Not only is it true that ancient evils still in existence

are at long last being branded as evils and heartily deplored, it is also true that human life has risen to a higher level. From many forms of fear, as, for example, fear of comets, demons, witchcraft, the evil eye, western civilization has been delivered. And there has been a remarkable change for the better in man's treatment of women and children.

MANY GAINS REGISTERED

Consider, also, such indisputable gains as religious toleration, equality before the law, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for a redress of grievances. Today it is only too true that these dearly bought gains, even in this country, are in no little danger of being lost; but the fact remains that they were once achieved and if we are worthy of our sires we shall not allow them to be lost. Nor shall we weakly submit to the loss of "government of the people, by the people and for the people." Or to the loss of the free public school, including the high school. Or to the loss of the right of an individual to be true to the dictates of conscience even in opposition to the decrees of the state. Three other gains achieved in former generations which we of this generation are in honor bound to maintain.

There has been progress on other than mechanical lines, thanks to brave, far-seeing, long-suffering minorities who refused to be daunted by present facts or to be intimidated by threats or to give way to weariness, cynicism or despair.

"Behold, my prophetic minorities. They are despised and rejected of men, but with their stripes humanity is healed. They shall see of the travail of their soul and be satisfied." Have you and I the courage to be such a minority? Behold a torch kindled in the long ago by a brave, far-seeing idealist who, living in a world that was armed to the teeth, dared to prophesy the coming of a day when nations would not lift up sword against nation, neither would they learn war any more. Have you and I the courage to keep that torch alight now when the night is darkest, when all about us people are beginning to despair of an international order in which disarmament may actually be achieved and of an economic order that will be steadfastly conducive not to war but to peace? Have we the courage to keep alight this torch of a valiant faith—now when the rulers of the world, many of them, unregardful of the lessons of history and of the prayers of their peoples, are consenting to policies that make for war—are, indeed, recklessly preparing for another war which, if it comes, may leave us one with Nineveh and Tyre?

WHEN WARS SHALL CEASE

There are, of course, many things that will need to be done in this world if the nations are ever to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and learn war no more. But first and foremost there must be an unconquerable faith that such things can be done. There are cases, as William James pointed out, where faith in a fact can help create a fact; where, indeed, the fact cannot come unless there is a preliminary faith in its coming. This, undoubtedly, is one of them. International peace is one of those facts

A Pastoral Prayer

On the Occasion of the Celebration of American Methodism's Sesquicentennial

By Bishop William F. McDowell

ALMIGHTY GOD, who wast with our fathers of old, and didst lead them forth into a large place, be Thou also with us and lead us. Thou didst create in them a passion for the souls of men. Create in us, their descendants, a new passion for the souls of men and help us to build Thy Kingdom in the world of today. To them didst Thou give the experience of forgiveness and new life in Christ and of hearts strangely warmed. They went out into their world to tell with joy what God had done in them. Earnestly we pray that Thou wilt create in us clean hearts and right spirits, and send us out to tell our world that Christ has come, and that He ever lives.

Our fathers went out saying with assurance: "Whosoever will may come," "Christ has tasted death for every man," and other words like these. Lord God of our fathers, help us to sound these notes of salvation to our confused and bewildered generation. Make us certain in and of the things in which we must be certain or die. Make us sure in the things of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. This we crave, O God, and for this we pray. Make us sure of Thee and of Thy full meaning for human life.

Our fathers went out to make new societies and new lands. They longed for a new earth that would be heavenly in character. Their world everywhere pressed upon them, and they longed to transform it, to bring it to newness of life. Our world presses upon us, our Father. We could easily despair of it if we could forget Jesus Christ. Send us into this present world with all its evil and all its goodness along with the everliving Christ and His ever moving Cross and His undying purpose and power to redeem. Help us, O God, to do our part to make the spirit, the truth, the principles, the power of Jesus Christ prevail in the lives and the relations of men, nations and races.

Our days are before us, as our fathers' days were before them. Help us to put aside the hindering weights, the besetting sins that work such evil in us, and run with patience, wisdom, endurance, courage and hope, our own race in our own world. We fix our eyes and minds, our hearts and wills on Jesus Christ, Author and Perfecter of our faith, of our purposes and our lives. God of our fathers, be with us yet as we go forward with the redeeming Christ, for the world's redemption and in the dear Redeemer's name. Amen.

which simply cannot come unless there is a preliminary faith in its coming.

Today, therefore, it is all-important that at least a prophetic minority should keep alight that glorious torch which Isaiah kindled in the long ago. In the face of whatever disappointment at Geneva, whatever betrayal in Tokio or wherever else; in the face of whatever storm of skepticism, cynicism and defeatism, a prophetic minority must somehow keep that torch alight. To those who say, "It is expecting too much. It will never come to pass," they must boldly reply, "It is not expecting too much. It *will come to pass* that nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This, of course, they will be more likely to do if beyond man and his attempt to achieve a decent and enduring civilization they see God, "high and lifted up." When Isaiah uttered his daring prophecy, he closed with these words: "For the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it." That, I believe, must be the undergirding conviction of any minority that now undertakes to keep alive in the world the hope of international peace.

THE NATIONS AND PEACE

It is possible to argue that science by making war increasingly destructive is promoting peace. It is possible to argue that commerce by making the nations increasingly interdependent is promoting peace. It is possible to argue that a growing understanding of the causes of war is promoting peace, a growing determination on the part of youth not to be led to the slaughter for reasons that have nothing to do with the welfare of mankind but are, on the contrary, utterly inimical to the real good of their own nation and of every nation. It is possible to argue that a disillusioned multitude are waking up to the fact that their security and the security of their children are being imperiled by the stupid greed, the reckless ambition of a relatively few men who, unfortunately, now occupy seats of power, and that when their eyes are fully open they will put an end to a situation which they have no reason and no right to tolerate. But if in a day as dark as this we are to keep alight Isaiah's torch such arguments as these will need to be reinforced by an invincible faith in Almighty God. Only if we profoundly believe that "the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken it" will we be able with utter and contagious conviction to say: "It shall come to pass that nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Of course, faith without works is dead. Of course, a prophetic minority must not only talk faith but act it. It must persevere in its attempt to make a glorious dream come true. Have you and I the courage to play the full part of such a minority in order to secure for those who come after us a world in which mothers will not be asked to give birth to children who may be used as cannon fodder to advance the ends of greed, a world in which twelve-inch guns will be found only in museums as curious relics of an outgrown barbarism? If we have, we may while we live be despised and rejected of men, but we shall not have lived in vain. With our stripes some future generation will be healed, and we shall see of the travail of our souls and be satisfied.

Starved Souls

By Roy L. Smith

I am that bread of life. John 6:48.

UNDERNEATH all the foolish food fads by which we are beset, lies an increasing appreciation of the fact that good health depends upon good food. The human body, like a high priced motor car, must have a carefully selected fuel if it is to do its best work. Experts in the science of diatetics assert that thousands of people, even in our best homes, are suffering from malnutrition, not for lack of food, but for lack of life-giving qualities in their food. Professor Goodspeed, therefore, has added a very modern touch to our text when he translates Jesus' words, "I am the bread that gives life."

Far more serious than those diseases which afflict the bodies of men, are those which waste the souls of men. Spiritual health, either to the individual or to the generation, is even more important than physical health, and anyone who looks even a little below the surface symptoms of our times knows that the major cause of our present distress is spiritual malnutrition.

The advance of civilization has laid an increasing burden upon the individual. We have watched life grow more and more complex and dangerous issues multiply. As the world has grown smaller nations have moved closer together, with increased friction and complicated problems of adjustment resulting. With the invention of machines, the increase of large-scale production, and the accumulation of capital in great pools, the laborer and the employer have found themselves increasingly in conflict. Meanwhile the competition for world markets and trade advantages has grown more and more bitter, with international political problems, like menacing storms, always on the horizon.

THE BURDENS OF TODAY

Throughout the world there is a new color-consciousness among the non-white races. The war brought the colored people of the world to a realization of their importance in world affairs, and gave them a new sense of dignity. Nowhere do they accept the white man's domination with the same docility they showed two decades ago. This means that the white man must relearn the art of living in a world where he is no longer the final authority. There is, too, a growing sense of the solidarity of labor throughout the world. The struggle for human rights has made kinsmen of men whose blood was at wide variance. This movement, largely spiritual, is a challenge to the soul of the whole race. New political philosophies are bidding for acceptance, each with its violent advocates and equally violent antagonists. Whole peoples are setting out on social and economic experiments that may mean millenniums or catastrophic disaster. Such turbulence is straining the soul of the race to the breaking point.

Add to all the foregoing the fact that the world is in the midst of an economic collapse of unprecedented seriousness. Millions of honest, industrious, frugal and righteous citizens are in breadlines. Investments with the best endorsements have been wiped out. The best trusted economic laws have failed. For literally millions

of people the whole moral order has been shaken: belief in the dependability of the universe is being undermined. Only rugged souls are able to stand the spiritual strain to which the average individual is subjected. Only the most robust spiritual strength is sufficient to enable civilization to survive.

SPIRITUAL POVERTY REVEALED

The present debacle has convinced many people of the weakness of an economic system that allows such crises to develop periodically, but even more alarming has been the revelation of the spiritual weakness of the people.

Multitudes of men have lost all their love of life. They go to the tasks of each day with hopelessness. There is no zest, no sense of adventure, no thrill of achievement, no joy in living. They live constantly in a state of uncaring despair, their suffering leaving them dumb and voiceless. In the case of other millions the friction of life is slowly wearing them down. The prospect of foreclosures, loss of employment, the struggle for profits, the growing helplessness of the individual and revelations of graft in high places is gradually sapping their strength.

There is no nobility in a world dominated by hate. The bitter animosities that have developed between workers and employers, the suspicions that run rife between nations, and the appeals to prejudice in editorial columns, on magazine pages and from public forums, are but symptoms of our spiritual destitution.

We are losing our capacity for heroic action. It is true that an army of fathers go out without food every morning, as they go in search of work, that their children may have at least a little food. Mothers by the hundreds of thousands "starve for their brood." But en masse, we stoop to the lowest levels of selfishness and cowardice. Organized labor penalizes the public in order to win its wars. Big business blocks the President's recovery program for the nation because its own economic and political position is threatened. Meanwhile, the nation goes on a drunken debauch to balance the budget and great cities legalize gambling and go into partnership with gamblers to pay their running expenses.

High motives do not move us. Instead of sacrificing for great causes, we sacrifice great causes for profits or political advantage. We lack a great faith that gives us assurance in the day of difficulty. We say that we are only "looking the facts in the face," but we leave out of much of our consideration the one great fact—*the fact of God.* We are moved by the immediate, rather than by the eternal. We are terrified by the tens who are against us because we do not see the legions that are for us.

SPIRITUAL MALNUTRITION

Our fathers met great crises because they had a great faith in a God who gives causes their meaning. The pilgrim fathers sailed out of Southampton with songs on their lips because they believed their destiny was in the hands of a God who would see them through. Amid all the sufferings of that first winter on the barren coast of Massachusetts, they were unmoved because they were sure of God. Martin Luther could look into the face of his ecclesiastical enemies who might do him to death, and be indifferent to danger or political pressure because he was sure of God. Wesley might be driven out of the churches into the fields but he could not be deflected from his purpose, and he preached with the spirit of victory in his soul because he, too, was sure of God. In every crisis, every Savior of the world has been one who has been sure of one fact—*the fact of God.*

Our courage has gone because our faith has gone. There can be no courage where there is no faith. Men have courage because they believe in principles—in the power of principles to survive circumstances. But a people that will sell principles for profits, barter character

Roy L. Smith

for pleasure, or sacrifice manhood for dividends must be prepared to face the disintegration that inevitably follows.

The cause of this collapse is spiritual malnutrition. We have been feeding on much food, but it has not produced strength for the crisis.

More than a generation ago Dr. Stephen M. Babcock, of the University of Wisconsin, made the amazing discovery that cattle might be eating prodigious amounts of food and at the same time be starving to death. Extended investigations revealed the fact that life-giving food contains a strange element called "vitamins," which furnish the vitality necessary for maintaining life, and that the value of any food depends upon its vitamin content. The spiritual collapse of these last days makes evident the fact that we have been feeding on food that is lacking in spiritual vitamins. Jesus put the matter very plainly in his conversation with the woman at the well-curb: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I

shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." We have been abundantly fed, but not well fed.

Ours is such an intellectual generation. The free public school system of America, the state-supported universities, and the wide diffusion of knowledge through the aid of the printing press have made ours a brilliant generation. We know so much more than our fathers did. We know so much about disease, and have worked such miracles in stamping out epidemics and contagions. We know so much about the working of the human mind and have been able to restore peace to so many troubled ones through the aid of the modern psychological laboratory. We have discovered the significance of so many factors in our social life and have made astonishing discoveries among the physical forces all about us.

FEEDING ON HUSKS

But there is little spiritual leadership among our intellectuals. The whole trend of thought among the popular essayists, dramatists, novelists and philosophers of this generation is in the direction of cynicism and despair. The most sacred ideals and traditions are made the butt of ridicule and sarcasm. Vice and evil, for the first time in human history, are claiming the sanction of science and masquerading in the habiliments of intellectualism. The "intellectual" magazines and "sophisticated" fiction of the day leave one with a terrible feeling of depression. Humanism, the religion of trust in man, is the natural child of such a barren and arid mind-set. Instead of lifting up our eyes unto the hills, we are casting them down into the gutters. Instead of believing in an almighty God, we are urged to put our trust in a contemptible humanity.

Ours is such an active generation. Life was never so badly crowded. With all our rapid transportation, labor saving devices and decreasing hours of labor few of us have time to live. We race from one engagement to another, attend endless committee meetings, plan campaigns, sit in on conferences, exhaust ourselves in activity. In spite of the fact that a very large part of this activity is entirely unselfish and springs from generous motives, it empties life for millions of people. While we are cumbered with much serving the fountains of faith dry up.

We have been trying to feed the soul of the race on material things. Like the rich fool we have torn down our barns and built bigger ones, traded in last year's cars and bought faster ones. But the deepest joys of life have never been found in things or thrills. When stomachs are filled and backs are warmed, there still remain the great spiritual areas of life, in which we really live, still unsatisfied. We still lack that which lifts human life above that of the brutes.

"We must believe in God or go to the devil," said Sir Phillip Gibbs, and Jesus was never more of a necessity to the world than today, because he is the one leader of the world's thought who can restore a sense of spiritual security to the race.

Jesus' confidence in the reality of God was never shaken. He never argued the matter: he assumed the fact of God in everything he did or said. He did not attempt to prove the existence of God—he threw his life out into time in the confidence that God saw and cared, and that confidence sustained him even through death. He believed in God because the belief worked in life. He had ample reason to doubt. The multitudes forsook him at the first hint of danger. One of his trusted friends betrayed him into the hands of his enemies who did him to death. Another of his friends—one whom he had loved more dearly than the rest—denied him shamefully. Some hint of the agony of his soul appears in his cry from the cross, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" and, although the New Testament does not indicate that he had any direct answer, it is certain that he went out of life with an unshaken faith. God was as real to him as his suffering.

To all who stagger under the burden and terror of life, and seek a way out, Jesus says, "I am the way." By this he does not mean an escape. The intellectuals have sneeringly called faith an "escape mechanism," but in the case of Jesus it was vastly more than that. It was the way *through,* with light and victory at the end of the way.

Let all those therefore who have found their strength failing, feed on this "life-giving bread." Let all those who struggle on in the battle for righteousness, all those who stand alone in defense of truth and honor, all those who seek to right the wrongs of this world and put good in the place of evil, and all those who suffer for the sake of the kingdom of righteousness, *feed on this bread.*

Our fathers were satisfied to contemplate the bliss of a life to come, and the promises of Jesus are abundant to strengthen this hope. But we, through Jesus, have caught a glimpse of heaven coming down to earth, and we will never be satisfied until that dream has become a fact. That dream will never become a fact by any miracle coming down out of heaven—only by a miracle coming up out of the souls of men who have fed on the same spiritual food that made Jesus the world's redeemer. Therefore, I say unto you, "Feed on this bread." He who feeds on this bread shall never hunger again.

The Methodist Episcopal Number

The ministers whose sermons appear in this issue were selected, not by the Editor of The Christian Century Pulpit, but as the result of a ballot sent to the more than 16,000 ministers listed in the Methodist Episcopal year book. These ministers were asked to name the preachers whom they would like to have represent their denomination in this special Methodist Episcopal Number. The Christian Century Pulpit honors itself in extending its hospitality to these great preachers whom their brethren have delighted thus to honor. Among those selected by the ballot was Dr. E. Stanley Jones, who is now in India. To his regret as well as our own, he received notice of his selection too late to prepare and send a sermon for this issue.

The Minister as Prophet and Priest

By Oswald W. S. McCall

I PREACH. Why do I do that? Waive it—I know that you may also wonder why. But what is the significance, the value of all the preaching in the world this day and all the days? And the public praying? Yes, the praying.

Ministerial leadership in public prayer is a priestly function. If he has not the unhappiness to be an obstruction, the minister is, at that moment, a mediator between God and man. If God and man both dwell richly in him, our humanity will speak to God through him as he prays, and God will speak to us. But important qualities of imagination and heart, of intellectual vigor and discernment, must be added to one's religious experience ere he can become a priest of God and of men. Some men seem to think it is only necessary to be "spiritual." Furthermore, many a good man have I found unable to be a priest to me because divinity could not get to me across his intractable vocal chords. And as to my humanity, he had no command of the words necessary to capture its delicate shades and tones ere representing them to heaven. I suspect Jesus was not unpossessed of the graces or the crowds would not have delighted in him so.

But though a man may not be equal to a Paderewski when he touches the ivory keys, he need not on that account perpetrate too heavily upon our patience. Training will do much with men even of poor talent. We love music, perhaps all men love real music. That is why we resent much that is offered in its name. Sufferers from poor performance have more than once gone through life supposing they hated music—or religion. A good deal of responsibility rests on the man who rises to represent the divine wonder.

● *The Minister as Priest*

For instance, what sort of men ought we ministers to be if by what we are, and by how we appear and sound, the people are to achieve the proper benefits of public prayer? Consider those benefits, and see in them the stuff of which ministers should be made. Led in prayer by us the people should be:

(1) Corrected in perspective—by escape from self-preoccupation; by having joined in the large prayer of many fellowmen, of men of many various woes, and interests, and plans; by having spoken to the God of vast projects and of the spacious eternities. A little man can never lead the people there.

(2) Lifted in hope—by sharing the thanksgiving of men who have marvelously escaped: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream!" A mean, self-pitying man, with no laughter of great deliverances in his soul, will never lead the people there!

(3) Quickened in moral sense—by confession of sin, by reaffirmation of

Oswald W. S. McCall

eternal right, by intercession for the coming of the kingdom of God, by renewed, mystic awareness of "the Holy"—for though "clouds and darkness" may be round about him, "righteousness and judgment," when we draw near to him, are ever found to be "the establishment of his throne," and "mercy and truth go before his face." A worldly minister, or vain, deficient in personal piety, or one spiritually strangled in the horrors of endless committee and office work, must fail here. How can a man suffering from moral and religious drought encourage in his fellows the free flow of life's higher courses?

(4) Strengthened in courage—by inward repair and attunement, by being made inwardly "unanimous," by the surge of health, by sharing the faith of those who believe we are "not alone." Strengthened, too, in that highest courage of all, courage with oneself. No timid or self-indulgent man, afraid of his skin or of his place, will, in public prayer, or in any other way, lead the people to great fountains of courage.

In the mirror of these four blessings let the priest look, that he may measure himself.

● *The Minister as Prophet*

The minister is a priest, he leads in worship. But he is also a prophet. That is, he is a speaker of God's mind. He is the teacher and instructor in the highest wisdom known to man. Alas for him if he allows this high function to become fouled in human prejudice, temperament or ignorance.

The preacher has his prejudices and his preferences, as has any other man, but when he enters his pulpit, he must cease to be as any other man. Then, like a judge, he must refuse to know or to speak except according to the evidence, and his pulpit must be as sacred to truth as the judge's bench. As a man he may be timid, temperamental, but not as a preacher.

It is a high demand, and a preacher's ability to meet it will be affected by his high or low talents of mind and of character. There can be inefficiency and unfaithfulness among preachers as among other people, but a man of great talents, dedicated to speaking fearlessly and lovingly the highest truth that is in him, whether he speak in a pulpit or out of it, or write with a pen, remains surely the most saving glory among us.

● *Speaker of the Mind of God*

This sort of man lives awake to his own time, but is not narrowed by it, being conscious of all time. He feels the passions of the moment, but if he cultivates the mind that walks with God, he is superior to them. The "new-fangled" does not dazzle him, for it is his custom, as someone has said, like a miner to bring the new found thing, that may or may not be a gem, out into the sunlight for examination, where it will be searched by the light that has shone for a hundred million years. In the light of the old he will test the new. The latest thoughts and ways of his fellowmen he will bring into the searching brightness of all human experience, of all divine illumination.

August task! "As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end": to that he says: "Amen!" and takes his stand on things so deep they do not change, on paths so beaten they cannot err. So he inquires of all scripture and of all history and of all art; most of all he inquires of God, quickening, by much

communing, the intuitive in him, so that he extricates himself from the temporary and rises to elevations whence life may be viewed from above and seen before and after. Thus he speaks. The preacher—speaker of the mind of God!

As such he becomes a builder of life and gives to it comfort, guidance and inspiration.

● *Comfort for Discouraged Humanity*

(1) He gives it comfort—not by administering anesthetics but by showing men truth. Dangerous are the consolations that forsake truth—expecting pardon without promising reformation, trusting God's love without responding to his holiness, depending upon his power and providence without caring to allow for his methods. But the wise preacher will establish life in truth and so comfort it. He will establish it in *the truth of the Godly Way*—for life must have health, and there can be little comfort where inward health is not; in *the truth of the Unseen Other*—inasmuch as we indeed are "not alone, for the Father is with us," and the mystery of this extra resource and consoling sympathy is an amazing thing; and in *the truth of the Hopeful Tomorrow*—for life is not finished. Thus to sinning, failing, suffering, discouraged men he speaks great words of calm and reassurance.

● *Guidance in the Godly Way*

(2) He gives life guidance—in the mind of God. In principle he says two things: First, *bring life to its knees before your God.* Here he begins to guide in the "godly way." *"Your* God," he says, for your submission to another's God is not what he desires. Your God will greaten as you truly kneel before him, he will add to himself meanings that other men than you have found, but which can never mean much to you until you bring your life to its knees before such holiest as you have seen. Chasten your heart there before him, the preacher says, face the responsibility of duty, the authority of the right and the true. As Walt Whitman assures us, "Without the power to sacrifice itself, a great idea will never bear fruit." Yes, there can be no inner quality without this. Here is the meaning of altars since time began, whereon, often very dimly, has been shadowed forth this supreme action of the soul, unthroning itself that it may be enthroned, yielding itself to God that he might scepter it. It is the first need, the achievement of inner quality. . . .

But now the *outer criterion.* The second thing the preacher says is: *bring behavior to the test of good will.* With utter courage employ the judicial mind, appraise your deed in the light of universal benefit, be on guard against the subtleties of special pleading for yourself. That which is not beautiful, or kind, or of human advantage, cannot be good. One's companions, work, pastimes must stand before this bar. Personal life and public affairs together must be measured by this criterion, and not always without irritation. For he who draws a straight line exposes the crooked, he who builds fine furniture reveals the cheap, and not always will he be welcome who lights a lamp. But the preacher must go on with his guidance, for the wisdom of ages speaks in him.

● *Life Inspiration Through Truth*

(3) Finally, the preacher gives life inspiration—by breathing into men their own highest truth. He fans the holy flames in men, he accosts men as divine, speaks to them on levels of their strength and greatness, not of their weakness. He unrolls for men a vision of measureless power, of deathlessness, of sublime excellence—and as men look they are set free again. For the great spectacle ever inspires, and the spirit of man mounts upward at sight of sublimity.

* * *

Radio and aeroplanes are of today, steamships and railroads are of yesterday, muskets and sailing ships, catapults and chariots are of a few days earlier, but the crystal light of the prophet, when did that begin? And when, in all the changing, tragic, climbing story of the race, was there a time when no man rose up with divine inspiration to tell to his fellows what he had glimpsed of the mind of God? More ancient than home and marriage, ancient as war and pain, old as the problems of life and the yearn of the spirit of man, preachers and priests, in one form and another, seem to have been always with us.

Titles and Texts — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

Edwin T. Buehrer, First Congregational, Haworth, N. J. "Salvation by Conflict." Rom. 7:19—"For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

Gerhard W. Grauer, Philippus Evangelical, Cincinnati, O. "Singing in the Wilderness." Exod. 32:18—"It is not the sound of men conquering, nor the sound of men being conquered; what I hear is the sound of people singing."

W. Franklin Harkey, United Presbyterian, Houston, Pa. "The Magnificences of God." Acts 2:11—"We hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .
Title of sermon

. . . . . .
Text used (Write out the text)

. . . . . .
Name of minister

. . . . . .
Name of church

. . . . . .
Address

Harold L. Lunger, Wooster Avenue Church of Christ, Akron, O. "Jesus—Fool or Wise Man?" 1 Cor. 1:23—"We preach Christ crucified. . . . unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called. . . . the wisdom of God."

John Van Eman Berger, First Presbyterian, Portage, Wis. "Sackcloth Under Royal Robes." 2 Kings 6:30—"The king. . . . rent his clothes. . . . and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh."

William C. S. Pellowe, Jefferson Avenue Methodist, Saginaw, Mich. "Bartering Reality for Unreality." Rom. 1:25—"They bartered the reality of God for what is unreal." (Weymouth)

Otto Liebner, Bethlehem Methodist, Evansville, Ind. "Present-Day Atheism." Luke 6:46—"Why do you call me: 'Lord! Lord!' and not do what I tell you? (Goodspeed).

K. K. Haddaway, Congregational, Somerville, Mass. "The Question of the Frustrated." Luke 7:19—"Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?"

Carrol O. Morong, Warren Avenue Baptist, Brockton, Mass. "Dislocated Hearts." Matt. 6:21—"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

I COULD not get greatly excited over the charges that the election was won by the democrats through the corrupt use of relief and other federal funds. That these funds had considerable weight in determining the result can hardly be disputed, though their weight could hardly have been decisive. But if it is not one corrupting factor it is another. The people's vote is usually determined by quite irrelevant considerations. In the nature of the case it is humanly impossible for the electorate to exercise the franchise intelligently under our system of so-called democracy. The idea that we have a real democracy is naive. I suppose I am a citizen of ordinary intelligence. But in casting my ballot I voted in utter darkness. I suppose I voted for 50 candidates. I knew nothing about any of them save three. I voted for democratic congressmen—holding my nose, but desiring to support Roosevelt. For the rest of the ticket, with two exceptions where I knew the candidates personally, I voted straight republican—again holding my nose, but desiring to register my revolt at the democratic machine which holds Chicago and Illinois in a control as corrupt as that once exercised by Big Bill Thompson. Yet I knew that if the republicans won it would only be a case of turning the democratic rascals out and putting in a pack of rascals not one whit better. This frank confession by one citizen of his sense of helplessness in our vaunted democracy may be indiscreet. On the other hand, it may be that we shall never get true democracy until more of us honestly make similar confessions.

I Exercise My Sovereignty

The Book of the Month

REALISTIC THEOLOGY, *by Walter M. Horton. Harper & Brothers, $2.00.*

THE AUTHOR of this book is one of the most interesting minds in America now at work on the problems of religion. I look upon each new book of his as a major event—a news item that deserves to be featured in headlines. His latest is the most richly comprehensive expression that he has yet made. It ought to be read by every minister. It could be read with equal understanding by any intelligent layman. The author does business in deep waters, but he never roils them: the ordinary reader is able to see clear to the bottom. I have a crow to pick with Dr. Horton over what I think is a wholly wrong and misleading treatment of "liberalism." But this is no place to discuss that. I can only say that this book will orient the reader in the new world of religious thinking a little more adequately than any single piece of writing which has come under my eye in a long time. But nothing I can say is so clear a proof of this as an almost random quotation from the book itself. Hear this. The author is discussing the "two hands of Providence," one of which is "iron-gloved," the other "warm and human," and he makes God say to our generation: "You must and shall have deeper fellowship in your social order. You may take it *this* way (stretching out the right hand) or you may take it *this* way (clenching the left fist). If you will hear my word, you may yet make the great soulless machine of your industrial civilization an instrument for the common good and a bond of fellowship between you; but if not, then I will smash your civilization, and reduce you to a more primitive level of existence where you must recover the art of fellowship, which your pioneering fathers knew, and you have lost." That little sample of the author's realism will surely make my readers wish for more.

A Thought for the Month

MANY of us ministers lose some of the richest opportunities of our calling simply because we are the victims of an inferiority complex. I do not refer to our personal self-appraisal—there is plenty of egotism in most of us! Nor do I refer to any disesteem in which we hold our profession—most of us are proud to be ministers. What I have in mind is something much more relevant to our work. We stand too much in awe of men and women—especially of prosperous, comfortable, influential and apparently self-contained men and women. We cannot quite believe that they deeply need and truly crave those goods of the spirit which we as God's prophets have to offer. Some need them, of course—the broken, the enslaved, the lonely, the poor, the unemployed, the invalided. But the successful, the affluent, the intellectual, the leaders of the community—such persons seem so self-sufficient, so complacent, that we treat them as desirable *contributors* to the organization of religion, but not as themselves in need of salvation. So we seek to *enlist* their help rather than to help *them.* They become patrons of religion rather than religious men and women. The fault is with us ministers. Most of us spring from modest social backgrounds, and the unruffled surface of the strong and competent citizen takes on a glamour in our eyes, blinding us to the fact that below this apparent self-complacency there is conflict, craving, self-depreciation, just as intense and just as clamant for divine help as that which cries out to us from the disadvantaged and helpless members of the community. We must come out of this delusion. We must penetrate the complacent façade of the privileged and successful, and confront them boldly with the simple but imperative gospel of God. I sometimes think that in our timidity and awe we do not give the rich and powerful a fair chance at religion. We would be amazed at the spiritual results if we pitched our ministry to a key of unflinching boldness and saw every man—the "strong" as well as those who are confessedly broken—standing in the need of prayer and repentance.

On a Certain Boldness In Dealing with Men

Charles Clayton Morrison

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The January Number

The January issue of the Pulpit will include sermons by Allan Wright Chalmers, of the Broadway Temple, New York city; Beryl D. Cohon, of Temple Israel, Boston; Henry H. Crane, of Elm Park Methodist church, Scranton, Pa.; Charles H. Heimsath, First Baptist church, Evanston, Ill.; David A. MacLennan, Emmanuel church, United Church of Canada, Montreal, and others. The sermons in this issue will strike the New Year note.

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